

An Essay
on
Pathological Anatomy

Respectfully Submitted
to the
Faculty
of the
Homoeopathic Medical College
of
Pennsylvania

On the First day of February One thousand
Eight hundred and fifty Seven.

By
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of
New York

Gentlemen,

In conformity with the requisitions of this Institution, it devolves upon me to present to its faculty, a written dissertation upon some subject bearing upon Medical Science.

The difficulty attending the performance of such a duty to the inexperienced Student, whose mind is yet shrouded in the mazes of theoretical and dogmatical speculation; must serve as a sufficient apology for blasted hope, or unsuccessful effort!

In reviewing the various

branches embraced within the
circle of Medical Science, I find
none claiming a higher considera-
tion, and none that has met with
more unmerited neglect, than
Pathological Anatomy. Upon this
subject, however it will not be
expected that I shall offer any-
thing more, than to point out so
far as I am capable, its imp-
ortance, and the influence it
will exert over the destiny of
our science.

The practice of Me-
dicine, and indeed every ration-
al theory in regard to disease, must
be derived from a proper
cultivation of Pathological An-

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-atomy. Select any disease you wish, and does it not present a problem which we are called upon to solve? and as a principle to direct us, we have symptoms: some perceptible to our senses, and others to the patient only. These symptoms are an "expression of suffering on the part of the organ affected,"

In the animal economy however, one diseased part will not unfrequently produce in a distant and healthy part of the body, by sympathy, a train of symptoms, often so prominent as to obscure the

true seat of disease,
 circumstances. When thus
 circumstanced, what will aid us
 in the elucidation, and serve as
 a guide through this (if I may
 be allowed the expression) "Grim-
 erian Darkness"? Will our Anatomic-
 al knowledge serve us as a
 pioneer? It will not. However
 minute and comprehensive this
 may be, (admitting the importance)
 it can be of little service when
 placed in this dilemma. Descrip-
 tive Anatomy shows us the relation,
 textures and appearances of parts,
 as they exist after death. It is
 the science of the dead mani-
 mate machine, after the "vital

Spark" has fled its torment,

It explains to us nothing
of the phenomena^{mena} of life. It
does not show us these parts
in full active operation, each
performing their varied offices,

But it may be said, Physiology
will here assume its province,
it being the science of life.

Will a knowledge of
the healthy always explain the
morbid phenomena? There is
a "Pathological as well as a
Physiological life". Physiology
informs us of the various act-
ions and uses of organs, whose
structure is revealed to us by
anatomy, - and although a

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Knowledge of this important science is principally obtained by the cultivation of human and comparative Anatomy, and close observance of functions, as they exist in man and animals. Yet by these means alone, but one portion of the veil which hangs over nature's most interesting laws, can be raised.

Pathological Anatomy, aided by clinical observation, informs us of the mysterious relations which exist between the different organs of the body when under the influence of disease, and tells us how far they may be changed by abnormal

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action, and still be able to
carry on their functions.

It remains for Pathological
Anatomy to inform us of the
true nature and extent of the
disease; and let him who doubts
its superiority over every other
means of investigation, compare
the mere theorist, with the
pathologist of the present day.
The former draws his conclu-
sions from abstract specu-
lations and scholastic dogmas,
The latter goes directly to
the organs involved, and with
his Scalpel reveals the true
seat of ~~lesion~~^{lesion}, and draws
his conclusions from ~~abstract~~

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moral evidence. He raises
the veil which conceals from
him, the secrets of nature, op-
ens a wider field of observation,
and thereby serves to elicit in-
formation of facts, without
a knowledge of which, would
remain forever hidden from
him.

It is a knowledge of
this science, of less importance
to the Surgeon for the investi-
gation and reparation of
mechanical injuries, or those
of organic ^{lesion} requiring
operation.

Although a knowledge
of this science may not be

deemed essential in enabling the Surgeon to perform operations on the healthy part of the body, yet in many cases falling under the cognizance of the Surgeon, he would have a fallacious guide to his knife, did he wholly rely upon his knowledge of descriptive, unaided by Pathological Anatomy,

Without a knowledge of the extent of the affection, its character and its relations, as is frequently the case with other diseases of a different character; here, could he with confidence

in himself, and safety to his patient dare to undertake a difficult operation,

What has enabled modern Surgeons to carry their instruments with so much intrepidity, and success through parts where lesion would have proved fatal and stayed the aneurismal flood, ~~and~~ thereby silencing the mandate of death?

Why does the Surgical Anatomist dissect so minutely the different fascia of the thigh, and so closely trace out the tortuosities of the epigastric artery, or take such

deep interest in such points as the crural arch, and abdominal ring?—Because she has in view Pathological Considerations, and Surgical Therapeutics, "Points apparently the most trivial, become the most attractive when connected with Pathological Considerations," and it is this that has explained to us the formation of callous and reproduction of bone, and thus shed great and important light in the wide and interesting field of Surgical Science,

Or does its application rest here; we might extend

it to every branch of Medical Science, and thus continue to urge its importance; but I forbear, and leave the task to more able and maturer minds.

We are not really Students of Medicine, untill with Scalpel in our hands, we seek ~~at~~ every opportunity to elicit that information, which will enable us to discriminate between the dissimilarity that exists in the healthy and unhealthy structure, and qualify us to discharge the high and arduous duties assigned to our profession.

But independant of

professional briefs, there is no study better calculated to awaken our deep and serious attention, to enlist our warmest zeal; than the study which acquaints us with that mysterious organization, and the laws which govern the economy of man. "It is not a temple of massive structure, but noble in its unadorned simplicity,

In it are registered the accidents of the changing world; here science sits enthroned and here the silent adoration of the Almighty works are continually ascending like

clouds of fragrant incense,

The Student
of Anatomy, in an especial man-
ner, has objects at all times
claiming his deep and serious
attention; he has proofs, such
as no other can offer, of the
power and wisdom of this
great architect,

Did not the
evil propensities of man re-
quire a moral code; what a
glorious medium for the worship
and adoration of creative wis-
dom - to the enthusiast, to a
man of exalted virtues and
reverence for nature's works,
no temple is more solemn,

no truths more powerful: the
mysteries of its operations,
the uniformity and sublimity
of its structure, elevate and
expand the mind and soul
that beggars description,

Then on
the other hand, we contemplate
the attractions which man has
accomplished by the exercise
of his intelligent principles,
how he has risen step by step
from the ignorance and super-
stition of his native state, to
a knowledge of himself, dis-
pelling mystery after mystery,
which hung over created na-
ture and with it superstition

after Superstition, which brooded
 over and enthralled the mind
 of man; we are almost shocked
 at the boldness and struck
 with apprehension lest we may
 have criminally broken the laws
 of nature and unlawfully peeped
 into the secrets of the living God,

Yet since in our view we are
 only exercising that Superior faculty
 with which he has endowed and distinguish-
 ed us from the rest of animal creation,
 and since the result tends to benefit the
 human family, we are constrained to
 justify the course and urge its
 continuance,

The writer should learn to spell correctly—